

## **National Shortage of Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib) Vaccine -- Affects Ability to Comply with Immunization Requirements -- (July 29, 2008)**

There is an ongoing national shortage of Hib vaccine, which began in December 2007. In order to conserve the national supply, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and other professional groups recommend that:

- The 4<sup>th</sup> dose of Hib vaccine should be deferred in healthy children at age 12-15 months. There is an exception for specified high-risk groups described below.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> dose should continue to be given to certain children at increased risk for Hib disease (including children with asplenia, sickle cell disease, human immunodeficiency virus infection, certain other immunodeficiency syndromes, malignant neoplasms, and those who are either American Indian or Alaska Native).

An MDPH advisory about the Hib shortage and revised schedule is available at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/imm> and then see section on Advisories.)

Receiving Hib vaccine according to the recommended schedule is required for child care (102 CMR 7.09 [5][c]) and preschool (105 CMR 220.500) attendance. As a result of the shortage, many healthy children will have had their 4<sup>th</sup> booster dose of Hib vaccine deferred. Therefore, MDPH is temporarily amending its recommended schedule for Hib.

### **How to Meet Hib Requirement During Shortage Period**

Children who have not received their 4<sup>th</sup> dose of Hib vaccine can attend child care and preschool, if they have the proper documentation.

Providers, child care centers, and preschools can indicate '**temporary shortage**' in the immunization records of those children affected by the shortage in order to meet this requirement.

For more details, please see the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Dispatch* from December 19, 2007, available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm56d1219.pdf>.

Providers, child care centers, and preschools should track children for whom the booster dose is deferred to facilitate recall when vaccine supply improves. At that time, MDPH will re-institute previous recommendations for Hib vaccine.

MDPH will keep you informed about changes in the supply of Hib vaccine, as well as any corresponding changes in schedules or requirements. If you have any questions, please call the MDPH Immunization Program at 617-983-6800 or 888-658-2850.